

The World Wireless Beacon

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Coast Guard Deep-Sixes Morse Code

NORFOLK, VA., April 1, 1995 (AP) The Coast Guard turned off its Morse code equipment after nearly a century of monitoring radiotelegraph distress calls such as the one following RMS TITANIC's 1912 collision with an iceberg.

The reason: "Modern Technology," said Jim Wren, a Coast Guard master chief who has been a radioman for 23 1/2 years. "We've just found more rapid and secure ways of communicating."

But as the equipment was shut off, some veteran radiomen complained that satellites and automatic navigation beacons don't have the same personal touch as the keyed "dots" and "dashes" the Coast Guard has sent and received since the early 1900s.

"It's the human touch," said Petty Officer Tony Turner, a 10-year radioman at the Coast Guard's Atlantic Communication Station in Chesapeake, VA. "It's coming from a person's hand, through the air, into another man's ear - and there's no language barrier."

"I'm not real excited about this," Wren said. "It's a sad moment."

A group of local radio operators gathered at the Chesapeake station before the closedown message to "sit around and talk old times" as Wren said, and to bid farewell to the familiar signals that carried news about ship arrivals and departures and sea emergencies. The station's final Morse code message was signed off at 7:19 p.m. EST.

Similar closings were going on at Coast Guard communication centers in Boston (NMF); Miami (NMA); New Orleans (NMG); San Francisco (NMC); Honolulu (NMO); and Kodiak, Alaska (NOJ).

"I think it's the right thing to do, but I understand the nostalgia," said Capt. Fred Montoya, commander of the Chesapeake center. "It's something these guys are brought up with, something they believe is the best..."

Montoya said the Chesapeake station handled up to 10,000 Morse code messages a month as recently as five years ago. That fell to about 500 in recent months, he said. As for SOS distress calls, the Coast Guard received only two during all of 1994 and none so far this year, Montoya said....

Capt. Montoya also said that cargo ships and other vessels can still use Morse code through commercial relay stations that notify the Coast Guard of an emergency. And in some ways, he said, the old code is still superior.

"Dots and dashes are probably the easiest things to detect bouncing off the atmosphere. When voice and complicated signals can't get through, dots and dashes can usually be deciphered."

A Night To Remember

"CQ CQ CQ DE NMN NMN... BT
USCG IS NOW CLOSING DOWN
CONTINUOUS HFCW WATCH
AND CEASING ALL MORSE
CODE OPERATIONS IN THE HF
BAND... THE CHILLING SOS SIG-
NAL WILL NEVER AGAIN BE
RECEIVED BY A COAST GUARD
RADIO STATION...WHAT HATH
GOD WROUGHT."

As part of a very emotional ceremony held at U.S. Coast Guard CAMSLANT /NMN at Chesapeake, Virginia on a cool, windy March evening, these words marked the passing of an era: after nearly 100 years of Morse operations, the USCG would no longer listen nor transmit on the maritime CW frequencies. This closure came just 18 months after the Coast Guard ceased operations on the MFCW frequencies.

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Coast Guard - From Page 1

The ceremony marking the end of CW operations was very simple: several well-known Coast Guard communicators and a keynote speaker made brief remarks, the last official USCG CW message was sent, and the CW watch was closed forever. The entire event lasted just over an hour.

After a brief introduction by LCDR Bill Patterson, the CAMSLANT Executive Officer, the ceremony began with the presentation of the colors; followed by an invocation by LCDR Mullis, Chaplain, USN.

Captain Craig Nicholson, the first speaker of the evening, recounted his experience as a newly commissioned Ensign who had to stand a radio watch when one of the radio operators was unable to be onboard when his ship departed. Since Nicholson held a ham license and "knew the code," the ship's captain told him he would have to fill in for the missing operator. Although Nicholson knew the code, he knew nothing about the operating procedures: much to his embarrassment, the shore station he was trying to work immediately demanded that a qualified operator be put on watch! In an amusing ending to an amusing story, he said that after his cutter reached port, he went to the radio station to apologize and "ask for mercy." The operators there were astonished to learn they had been working an Ensign, and, given the circumstances, agreed that he had really done OK for a first-timer!

Captain Nicholson has had an interesting and varied career, serving as Chief of Telecommunications Operations and Facilities at Coast Guard Headquarters, the first Chief of Systems Planning for the Office of Command, Control, and Communications, as CO, CAMSPAC, the west-coast equivalent of CAMSLANT, and he

was Chief of Telecommunications for the Fifth CG District, which includes NMN.

LCDR Bob Salmon, currently the Chief, Communications System 2000 Staff, is one of the architects of the changes occurring in Coast Guard Communications. He described the history of the project, its aims and goals, and implementation schedule. LCDR Salmon spoke of the future mission of Coast Guard communications and the COMMSYS 2000 communications system re-engineering project.

LCDR Salmon became a Coast Guard radioman after enlisting in 1965. He was commissioned as a Warrant Officer in 1982, spent four years as Operations Officer, CAMSLANT, was CO, CG COMMSTA Miami (NMA) and is now the manager of the COMMSYS 2000 project.

After pausing for Colors, LCDR Patterson introduced Dr. Joseph Gardner, the Keynote Speaker for the evening. Dr. Gardner reviewed the history of Coast Guard radio communications in terms of the traditions and transitions that have occurred in the past 100 years. He cited examples from the Prohibition era, changes during and after the world wars and

more recent events that marked a transition from "traditional" methods as technology and needs changed. Among those he noted was the change from spark to CW, the addition of radiotelephone, radioteletype, computer technology, and others that indicated that transitions were occurring. Dr. Gardner concluded that the basic mission of the Coast Guard has not changed, only the techniques for carrying out that mission were changing.

Dr. Gardner, a former US Coast Guard radio operator and member of SOWP, operated CW from each of the

US Atlantic Ocean Stations while in USCGC Mackinac/NICC. He was later assigned to USCGC Sassafra/NODT for SAR, Aids-to-Navigation work, and icebreaking duties. An active ham, his call is K7CI.

Before the ceremony, held outdoors under a sprawling tent, three remote communications positions were set up for operations on three different NMN CW frequencies. At 2359 UTC, with great emotion and drama, Captain Freddy Montoya, CO, CAMSLANT, gave the order to Chief Dyer to send the last message and secure the HFCW radio watch. Chief Dyer saluted, said, "Aye, Aye, Sir," turned smartly to the operators seated at each position and repeated the order to send the last CW message. Using keyers, each operator began sending the final message by hand. Despite their nervousness and the fist-numbing cold wind, the final message was simultaneously sent on each frequency. The solemnity of the occasion was underscored as the lights were dimmed; only the glow from the receivers and the sounds of Morse filled the cool night air.

At 0019Z, April 1, 1995, Chief Dyer reported that the message had been sent and that the watch had been secured. With voice quaking, Captain Montoya ordered that the keys be collected. Respectfully, the audience stood while the chief went to each position carrying a large oak box; each of the three operators carefully placed his key in the box. The military members of the audience saluted as the chief closed the box and, escorted by his senior operator staff, reverently carried the box from the tent. Many tears were evident among members of the audience of nearly 200. Thus ended all USCG CW operations forevermore. Indeed, What hath God Wrought?

Traditions and Transitions

by Joseph V. Gardner, Ph.D

Keynote Address, March 31, 1995, at U.S. Coast Guard Communications Station CAMSLANT / NMN, Chesapeake, VA., on the closing of Morse Code Services.

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As we gather to observe, indeed to celebrate, the beginning of a new era, and by implication, the end of another, I would like to put this alpha and omega - this beginning and end...into an historical perspective... a perspective that examines and highlights the traditions of Coast Guard radio communications in the context of the transitions that have occurred since the early days of this century.

Although not all of the changes seem, from today's vantage point, to have been as abrupt as this one will be, change has always been a part of the history of the Coast Guard, especially in communications, which, while rich in tradition, have always been dynamic, and therefore, always in transition. Upon close examination we find that, despite the conventional wisdom at the time, these changes, when adopted, have always served to enhance the multiple missions of the Coast Guard. And so it is today.

Although we legitimately can and do trace the lineage of the United States Coast Guard back to 1790 and Alexander Hamilton's "fleet of cutters", the keel of our modern Coast Guard was laid just before a starry midnight in April of 1912, with the sound of ice rasping against the hull of the world's first and only unsinkable ship. Within a year after the frantic wireless signals from MGY -RMS Titanic - were forever silenced by the cold, deep waters of the North Atlantic, the USCG formally became the agency that would lead and manage the International Ice Patrol, maintaining the

safety of life and property at sea in the face of drifting bergs and growlers that calved off the glaciers of Greenland.

As several small services, dedicated to lifesaving, aids to navigation, and customs enforcement were to become integrated over the years to produce the modern Coast Guard, the formation of the Ice Patrol marked the beginning of a transition from separate groups with separate tasks into one unified service that continues in fine tradition down to the present day.

Now, as we all know, communications, or the lack thereof, were a major part of the Titanic disaster - from the alleged arrogance of the Marconi operators in refusing to acknowledge ice warnings while continuing to send routine greetings for the passengers, and Captain Smith's apparent disregard of the ice warning messages that were copied and sent to the bridge, to the confusion that reigned with the transmission of the new distress signal SOS in place of the traditional CQD.

Jack Phillips, the MGY chief operator who perished that night, and his junior operator, Harold Bride, stayed at the key until relieved by Captain Smith, thus continuing in the tradition of Jack Binns and others before them.

Although not highly publicized, each year on the anniversary of the sinking of Titanic, the International Ice Patrol drops a wreath at 41-46N 50-14W, in memory of those souls lost on that cold, cruel sea 83 years ago... as a reminder of the hazards of that sea,

and as a rededication to the original mission of the ice patrol, which has ever since been tied to an efficient and organized Coast Guard radio system.

After WW-I ended, and the transition from the old spark to the new CW continued (and not without debate as to the merits of CW over spark), another transition occurred with the enforcement of the laws of the "noble experiment". There were indeed riches to be made during prohibition by smuggling illegal liquor to appease the national thirst. Bootleggers ashore who disregarded the 18th amendment had only to contend with agents from the Justice Department, while smugglers afloat faced the USCG. However, it soon became apparent that not only were the rumrunners highly organized, they also relied heavily on radio to help their offshore fleets slip by the cutters on patrol. Coast Guard radiomen began intercepting more and more messages -usually encrypted - between illicit shore stations and the mother ships just offshore. For example, there were about 50 unlicensed shore stations within 10 miles of New York City in 1930, maintaining a constant flow of illegal traffic among the rumrunner fleets.

One of the best organized and most powerful radio networks during those days belonged not to any government agency but to the notorious Consolidated Exporters Corporation, which ran several powerful shore stations in North and Central America, and had a

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rum fleet that exceeded the size of the Coast Guard itself. Further, they hired only the best Morse operators and paid them very well to keep track of cutters, try to decoy and divert them, and to guide the "blacks" - - the black-hulled, small craft that brought the booze ashore, past the waiting Coast Guard. And for a while, the rummies were winning due to their fast boats, their organization, and, most of all, their superior communications capabilities. However, they did not count on the resourcefulness of the USCG and a brilliant young officer - Russell Waesche, the father of CG communications, who later became one of our most famous commandants.

When prohibition began, there were less than eighty radiomen in the entire Coast Guard, and they all knew each other personally. Clearly, more trained radiomen needed to be added to intercept the traffic and to decode the messages - - and they were. And as this traffic was intercepted and analyzed, courses and positions of known or suspected rumrunners were plotted and tracked. In addition, five 75-footers, including the famous CG-210, commanded by Lt. Frank Meals, a former radioman, were outfitted with modern hf receivers and improved direction finders, and each carried a half-dozen of the best radiomen in the Coast Guard.

Soon radio communications - once the bane of efforts to enforce the law, became instead the weak link in the smugglers' chain of operations.

Cutters no longer had to patrol thousands of square miles, conducting blind, random searches; instead they began to coordinate their communications and patrols using the same techniques the rummies had. Coast

Guard radio communications had become a formidable weapon against the rummies and in the process, the Coast Guard became known for excellence in operations and in the training of wireless operators.

Thus, it was during the prohibition era that Coast Guard communications began to mature - thanks largely to the lessons learned from the rummies themselves.

Although the Coast Guard Morse operators were beginning to win the radio war against the mother ships, many of the "blacks", that actually brought the liquor into obscure coves and inlets, were still wriggling through the net.

It was at about this time that another transition in Coast Guard communications occurred, and with it came a maxim that still holds true today. Let me illustrate by going back in time, before prohibition, before WWI and before the Titanic, to about the same time the Gresham was steaming toward the sinking Republic and Binns was sending his famous CQD.

At that time in Cape May, NJ there was a teen-aged lad named Al Cresse. Al was one of the first hams in the US, using the call AL, later, officially 8AL, then 2AL, W2AL, and finally, K2IX. One evening Al had a visitor: Marconi, who was building a wireless station in the Admiral Hotel, still standing in Cape May, came to Al's house with a request: Would Al keep his ham station quiet during the hours that the Marconi operators took traffic from the banana boats bound for the US? If so, Marconi's radiomen would let young Al hang around the station, learn all the latest stuff about wireless, try out some experimental things for them on his ham station and even work some of the ships.

Obviously, Al jumped at the chance

and spent nearly every day after school at the station. After high school, he went to the Philadelphia Wireless Institute and after graduating from there, became a radiotelegraph operator (for \$20/month) on one of those same banana boats he worked as a student. Later, when his cargo ship was torpedoed on its way to England in 1918, Al lost all of his possessions, including his radio license and some treasured letters from Marconi; however, he was more disturbed over losing a picture of his beautiful wife, Bea.

Not long after the war ended he retired from the merchant marine to spend more time at home with his family. Well known along the east coast for his radio abilities, Al was invited to join the Coast Guard as a chief RM to help devise a way to stop the rummy small boats. He built and installed rugged, and, for those days, compact radiotelephone equipment on the smaller cutters and patrol boats, taught the coxswains how to use their new radios, and helped organize and coordinate communications among the smallboats, cutters, and shore stations.

These installations dramatically reduced the incidence of successful landings among the blacks, who soon learned this basic truth: no matter how fast or how powerful their boats were, they couldn't outrun one of Al's radio waves.

Soon all the small cutters were equipped with AM radiotelephone that was (with all due respect) simple enough for a boatswain to operate. And so - thanks in part to the efforts of my good friend, the late Al Cresse - another transition in Coast Guard communications began: a transition from an almost total reliance on Morse code and the highly-trained Coast Guard radioman, to a more

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efficient system that broadened the scope and effectiveness of the Coast Guard and provided a portent of things to come.

If there was anything positive to come out of Prohibition (besides its demise), it was the vast improvement in the scope of Coast Guard communications and training.

The rummy era also provided good training for the next war, and the ocean station work that followed.

The second world war saw increased standardization of procedures as Coast Guard communicators were trained by and assimilated into the Navy for the duration. Radio schools sprung up all over; the sounds of code practice were heard everywhere, including at the Keystone Naval Radio School, which my father helped run at Bedford Springs, in the mountains of Pennsylvania. - One of my fondest photographic memories is a picture of me sitting on the edge of his desk twisting the dial on an ancient Collins receiver; the calendar on the wall reads March, 1945.

Is there a radio gene? Perhaps so...The Coast Guard has many father-son, brothers and related cousins who are all in radio. My younger brother was an RM; unfortunately he was in the Navy. But, when he was at the radio school in Bainbridge, he mentioned to an old Navy Chief that his older brother was an operator in the Coast Guard. The chief was impressed and said that the Coast Guard operators could run rings around the Navy and anyone else - and, in his words, the Guard had the best radio-men in the world. I couldn't disagree, after all he was a chief.

The end of the war brought many changes: improved equipment and

techniques, increased reliance on aircraft and meeting their radio communications needs, especially vhf and uhf on the weather ships sitting at the point of no return, and later - in the late 50's and early 60's - SSB, RATT and AMVER.

The promise, or depending on one's point of view, the threat, of RATT produced an quasi-informal organization - ZUT - a fraternal organization of Coast Guard CW operators, that attracted members from the other armed services and radio officers from the merchant marine. Its motto: CW Forever! -described its purpose. We feared the demise of Morse even then.

The latter, AMVER, marked a transition to automation - the introduction of computers to track ships, maintain databases on them, and obtain detailed SURPICS in a surprisingly rapid and accurate manner. Even in AMVER's infancy, it was startling to see a search request from a Pacific ocean station vessel, relayed by wire from NMC, come into the Customs House in New York, have a search performed on the database, and watch the danged thing punch cards and a tape and send a response back within a matter of moments. All the RM on watch had to do was keep a loop in the tape and make sure the it didn't jam. And now punched tape has gone the way of the punched card!

And due to improved aircraft and point-to-point satellite communications, not to mention weather satellites, the dits and dahs -the rhythmic music of the drifting ocean station vessels - are forever silent.

After Vietnam, the mission of the Coast Guard began to shift emphasis somewhat, to undergo another transition: drug interdiction, not unlike fighting the rumrunners, boat people needing rescue from a sea they underesti-

mated, and environmental tasks soon began to take on an added importance and put an ever increasing strain on the always too-small and underfunded service.

With the advent of communications satellites for automated wireless, and, of course, the aforementioned weather satellites, the role of the Coast Guard CW operator and Morse communications began to diminish. The basic mission - safety at sea - did not change, only the methods began to change: traditions were in transition once again.

But tradition is essentially nostalgia, - the way it used to be - while a transition points the way to what will be...and in Coast Guard communications it has always been so... from spark to CW to AM, FM and SSB, to today's virtually automated communications, for both routine traffic and for emergencies.

Thus at this place and time, it is not a tradition we are losing but a transition we are making - to a new technique pointing the way to the future- to what will be. Perhaps it's not as romantic as the solitary "Sparks" pounding brass on a tossing sea, but it heralds a method that will become in time more reliable, and more accurate, and will eventually enhance the original mission of maintaining safety at sea.

There are those who would question the reliability and expense of the complex equipment required; those who cite the false alarms due to inexperienced and under- or poorly-trained personnel. But in any transition, early errors are always magnified, and it is under this magnification, they are corrected. Just as there is always resistance to change ... so there are always glitches as change occurs. But

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change, with adjustments in its course, occurs anyway.

There are those who would say that now is not the time; maybe someday, but not now. But the Coast Guard has traditionally been a leader in technique and technology of maritime communications, from spark, through the lessons of the rumrunners, the various wars, and the weather ships, to this age of satellites.

While others still stand watch on the old CW circuits, the Coast Guard is moving into the future - CW, as reliable as nostalgia tries to tell us it was, will simply no longer meet the needs of the Coast Guard of the future. For those who understand this, no explanation, no rationale, is necessary; for those who don't or won't, no explanation is possible.

Just as the first rays of an April dawn in 1912 revealed, in the reality of an unimaginable disaster on a cold grey North Atlantic, the end of one era and the beginning of another in both radio communications and the role of the US Coast Guard, so does today celebrate an alpha and omega - a beginning and an ending.

In keeping with the tradition of Coast Guard radio communications, we mark, and not without some emotion among those of us who live and breathe the code, the final moments of a technique that will no longer fulfill the future mission of Coast Guard communicators.

And so, as we close the log today, ..let us not mourn the passing of the old, but celebrate the beginning of the new ..for through this latest transition, the greater TRADITION - that of Semper Paratus - will live forever.

Editor's Note: Dr. Gardner, SOWP 5068-M, K7CI, is Senior Applications

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End Of An 85-Year Epoch

A LETTER from Birgitta Gustafsson Torggatan 8 B S-731 32 Köping, Sweden:

March 11th, 1995

Dear Editor, Morse code operations are ceasing and the old coast stations well known by Sparks are closing all over the world. Sad but inevitable, I guess. I enclose a summing-up of the 85-year-story of Göteborg Radio/SAG, now ended.

The call sign of Göteborg Radio/SAG became silent on the 1st of January 1995, both on phone and Morse code. HF CW-traffic closed down 2.5 years earlier, and now Stockholm Radio/SDJ has taken over the remaining traffic on VHF, MF and 500 kHz.

Left in the old coast station building in Onsala, some miles south of Göteborg, is Maritex (the Swedish system for maritime telex), HF phone calls, automatically exchanged through Maritex, and service to Inmarsat.

Göteborg radio started in 1910 in Navy-owned buildings at Nya Varvet in Göteborg. When HF traffic was introduced at sea in the twenties, SAG became the long distance centre for Swedish ships all over the world and has stayed so through the years. In the thirties, SAG outgrew its old buildings at Nya Varvet, but not until after WWII did the new station in Onsala open.

Since 1947 coast stations in Sweden

have always been official MRCCs. On April 1, 1995 a new, combined MRCC/ARCC opened at Karingberget in Göteborg, situated inside the Naval base at Nya Varvet where SAG was born. Karingberget RC is managed by the National Maritime Board, the Navy, the Coast Guard and the Civil Aviation Board. It will handle Search and Rescue operations (SAR) of merchant and navy ships and civil airplanes, SAR-staff from SAG, (all of them old Sparks, although CW will not be used any longer) have been reemployed at the MRCC/ Karingberget.

Stockholm radio/SDJ, the last remaining civil coast station in Sweden, still has a lot of traffic to handle. CW traffic increased tremendously when eastern Europe collapsed and its coast stations collapsed too. SDJ will remain as an MRCC until February 1, 1999, the starting date of full GMDSS. After that date the fate of SDJ is uncertain as the Maritime Board prefers one single MRCC at Karingberget, for the long Swedish coast.

The people of Stockholm with its large archipelago are not very happy about those plans, and the last word has not yet been said.

(I read in the March edition of WWB, Russ Latimer's story about false alarms, interesting but frightening. He gives the translation of EPIRB as Electronic Positioning Indicator Radio Beacon. The Handbook for Marine Radio Communication and other sources call it Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon.)

-Birgitta Gustafsson 3854-M

(Author of *Radionoch Radiotelegrafisten*, published in 1991.)

The PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By John K. Kelleher

During the past year we have seen an increase in new member applications, and an increase in dues payments by existing members who either chose previously to be inactive, or misunderstood the fact that Life Membership did not excuse one from further dues.

This is a good beginning for our goal of reversing the membership decline. And our hard-working Executive Secretary and our Newsletter editor are beating the bushes to discover groups and organizations within which we might recruit more new members.

One of these is the AACS - originally the Army Airways Communications System; later the Airways and Air Communications System. In the post-war AACS, radiotelegraphy gave way to radioteletypewriter and telephony, but during the 1940s there must have been many AACS radiotelegraphers who qualify for SOWP membership.

These efforts are moderately productive - but it takes more to really turn things around. And here is where the current membership can help. Many organizations have used the technique "every member get a member" to increase their membership. I would guess that the majority of today's SOWP members know at least one other radiotelegrapher who is not an SOWP member, for one reason or another.

Every member should consider him/herself a recruiter, and act accordingly. Updated membership application forms are being designed and printed, and will soon be available. These can be obtained quickly from either our Executive Secretary or our WWB Editor; but don't let the lack of a form

deter you. If you only get an "I'll think about it" from a prospect, contact Waldo Boyd or Ted Phelps and have them send the prospect an application.

Good hunting, and good luck!!

73, Jack Kelleher

MERCHANT MARINE MEDALS

At the Merchant Marine Veterans reunion at King's Point, NY on May 6, 1995, certificates for medals were presented to those who had previously qualified for them.

We have been advised by Les Rauber, 5000-V, AA2FJ, that funding for the medals themselves will be provided by a private, non-government source.

If you have qualified for a medal for your World War II service, but did not attend the May 6 reunion, you need take no further action. Your medal(s) will be furnished to you.

RCN CW ERA HAS ENDED

The Royal Canadian Navy ceased all CW-related services, including training, on September 1, 1993. This word was contained in an unclassified message reproduced in the Canadian Amateur Radio Magazine, February, 1995. Readers may remember station CFH (Canadian Forces Halifax) which was active on MF and HFCW.

CW GETS THROUGH from NORTH POLE

When Canadian Coast Guard icebreaker *Louis S. St-Laurent* and USCGC *Polar Sea* reached the North Pole in August, 1994, communications became unreliable due to polar electromagnetic interference. The ships turned to CW as the only viable communications mode. (Thanks to Bob Eldridge, 3634-V, VE7BS. - Editor)

GREEK RO's SAY - "KEEP CW!"

Baltimore, MD:

At a meeting of the International Transport Federation Safety Committee on April 7, 1995, the Greek Radio Officers Union submitted a GMDSS resolution noting with concern that on the basis of undisputable evidence regarding the performance of GMDSS so far, it is safe to conclude that the reliability and availability of the system are not guaranteed and consequently the present Morse system should be retained until GMDSS proves its reliability and availability worldwide.

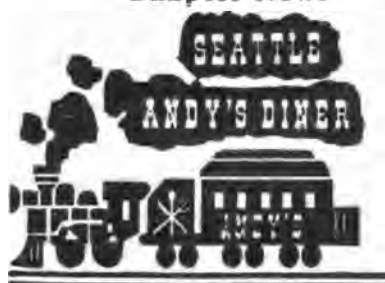
The Greek Radio Officers Union welcomes the introduction of satellite communications as a useful supplement to maritime communications modes. But the union opposes sole reliance on satellites for distress or safety because they are especially vulnerable to being inactivated by natural phenomena, accident or hostile action.

In its resolution the union requested 1.- the ITF to press the International Maritime Organization (IMO) with a view toward securing the political support of IMO member states for the co-existence of the Morse system in parallel with GMDSS.

2.- The union also urged all ITF seafarer affiliates to insist that maintenance and repair of sophisticated electronic equipment be performed by qualified on-board personnel.

3.- ITF affiliates were directed to communicate the text of the resolution to the French government, currently holding the presidency of the European Union, requesting that the sentiments expressed therein be incorporated in the final EU maritime policy document to be adopted later this year by the EU Council. (ARA Free Press)

Chapter News



The Jack Binns Chapter V

By Don Newman, 58-P, W7CO

The regular Spring meeting of the Jack Binns Chapter was held April 8 at Andy's Diner, Seattle, WA. This was the third luncheon held at Andy's since the closing of the DOG HOUSE: It has turned out to be a good place to meet. We meet in the Roundhouse Room. The diner is made up of famous old railroad cars. Lunch service was a bit slow but the time is well spent in conversation and renewal of old acquaintances. We had 32 in attendance including several XYLs.

After the luncheon period, the meeting was called to order by Chapter Director Dudley. We had the usual introduction of guests and visitors. Our new members are Patti Urie W7ZIW and Bill Urie W7XV. They have recently become members of the Pacific Coast (RJ) net. Another new member is Emil E. Oana, K6LGI.

Several of our regulars were unable to attend: VE7KWK, Keith, NCS of the Jack Binns net; Gene, VE7BRC; John, K7JP; King, W7QV. An attempt was made by John Dudley to bring Howard Mason who declined for health reasons. I attempted the same for Viggo, WA7CJV who also declined, feeling ok but not up to travel. We also missed Olive, VE7ERA.

During our self-introductions, some interesting stories were told of our

beginnings in wireless. Tuck, W7FLF, reported on the RJ net. Your reporter, Don, W7CO, commented on the Thursday Transcon net. (NCS, Mac, W0AP) and the proposed closedown of FCC monitoring stations later this year.

We had two Silent Keys to report: Marion A. Metz, W7BJG, 0976-P, who died of cancer and Keith Olson, W7FS, 0229-P, of natural causes. A period of silence was observed.

Our luncheon program was a very interesting one, with a fine talk and slide presentation by our chapter historian Doc Burton, W7SF, and his daughter Betty on their experiences in Guatemala, working with the "Habitat for Humanity" program. This fine program shows the very wonderful work being done by the Habitat group both locally and in Central America.

Doc Burton again urged us to get busy and submit our histories in the "wireless" occupation. I am working on mine, but it is a problem to know what to leave out!

PS: Too Bad Jack Kelleher could not drop by our meeting. I understand he was in Eugene, OR at a QCWA board meeting.

Editor's PS: (From a postcard from Don Newman, March 20, 1995 - "Was just sitting down to Mac's Transcon sked last Thursday (March 16), started getting pains, went to hospital, had a heart attack, was in hospital four days then back home and feeling great, boy, those gals sure took great care of me. John Dudley, W7ITJ took me to hospital.") Don says he's still feeling great.

Don says he always enjoys a "lemonade" at chapter meetings but has to watch out for the toothpicks lurking in the stuffed olives!



Pacific Southwest Chapter IX

7TH ANNUAL SOWP - QCWA LUNCHEON--- A BELL-RINGING EVENT

Some 81 SOWP and QCWA members, along with wives and special guests met on December 10, 1994 at the Safari resort in Scottsdale, Az. for the seventh time in as many years for a luncheon meeting not soon to be forgotten.

Dave Bell, W6AQ, of Hollywood and Amateur Radio fame, the featured speaker of the day, dazzled the audience with a humorous and splendid rendition of his past experiences in Tinsel-land, later revealing his thoughts and feelings about the aspect of morse code in amateur radio. Dave cleverly held the attention of all before getting into ham radio. This went over big with the female audience.

The meeting was a huge success. SOWP awards were made to Preston Simms, W5RM, NCS of the Southwest net, and Fred Garcia, our membership chairman. These two were honored for their dedication to the Pacific SW Chapter. The awards, both for SOWP and QCWA, were presented by Jack Kelleher, W4ZC, President of the National SOWP and Vice President of QCWA.

Prior to the festivities, everyone was treated to a most delicious lunch, the food and service at the Safari being excellent as always.

Continued, Page 9

Chapter News - from Page 8

Before lunch, Pat Higgins, XYL of Gerry, W9INP, led the crowd in a joyous sing-a-long with Leo Meyerson, W0GFQ, on the piano and Bob Menefee, AA7QJ, supplying accompaniment on the olde banjo.

The final event of the day was the drawing of door prizes. Diana Porter, N7EJO, was the lucky winner of the grand prize, a 2-meter FM transceiver, with Clem Chase, W7JGU, laying claim to the 2-meter 5/8 wave antenna. Many other prizes were drawn.

The meeting adjourned at 3 P.M. with best wishes to all for the upcoming holidays.

- 73 de Bill Jackson, 3612-V, W6HDP, Director, Pacific Southwest Chapter IX

NEWS from SOWP NETS

The Pacific Southwest net meets on or about 7055 KHZ. on Tuesday mornings at 0830 MST with Preston Simms, W5RU, as your NCS. The net lasts only a few minutes, so try and check in; we need some new blood! This is a good way to keep your speed up. Remember, we are trying to preserve the history and tradition of the brass pounder. Thanks, fellows. - W6HDP.

Southeastern Net (Sundays at 1400 EDT) now meets on 7053 KHz, says net controller Dan Courtney, 1156-P, K4HDV. The move was made to try to avoid SSB QRM, says Dan.

The H.K. Warner Memorial Transcontinental Net has changed its scheduled starting time each Tuesday to 1700 UTC, says Net Controller Tom Haymond, 5259-TA, W8CCN.

(See Net Schedule list, Page 19)



Ray Smith, 3874-P, N4MLC, writes from Covington, KY:

"...I want to state that I greatly enjoyed reading the interesting article in the Dec. '94 issue of The World Wireless Beacon entitled 'A Great Grandfather Looks Back' by Fred Kaiser. In one paragraph he mentions getting 'in business' (ham radio) in about 1920 with a Ford Spark coil, etc. It reminded me that I, too, acquired a used Ford spark coil around 1920, unfastened its contact assembly, took them apart, put them back on, etc., wondering what I might use it for, however I was only 8 at the time and for me ham radio was still down the road away.... Incidentally, (SOWP President Kelleher) and I attended the U.S. Army Signal Corps school at Ft. Monmouth, NJ within a year of each other back in 1933/34..."

(Many thanks, Ray! Ye Ed had a Ford coil, about the same time you were at Monmouth. We didn't get there until about 10 years later, tho!)

An Apology To...

Robert Bookwalter, 5423-TA, W4NWF, who writes from Venice, FL: Dear OM: You will find a check enclosed in spite of the fact that I have been listed (as SK) in several publications including the WWB. The SK first appeared in *QST* and others picked it up from there. I don't know how *QST* made the error as I have heard nothing from them.

I am glad to say that after 65 years as a ham, I am still active on the bands on SSB...I enjoy your publication very much. 73 (not 30) Robert Bookwalter.

Incoming Mail

George X.M. Collier, 2267-SGP, W0EG, writes from Anoka, MN: "Sorry I fouled up on dues. My check for two years herewith and I will try to keep a better eye on my address label. I'm 88 years now. Hope I live them out."

(George is a real OT from Great Lakes sailing, dating back to 1925 when he signed on Ann Arbor Car Ferry No.3/WDN for shuttle runs across Lake Michigan. He has written some great articles for *Sparks Journal*. Hang in there, George! - Editor)

Jack Casebeer, 0690-V, K6CE, writes from Caldwell, ID: "I was sorry to hear Ted Gotisar, 3197-V, W6TZK, passed away. He and Ralph Emerson, (5097-M; W7CE) were buddies of mine right after WWII. Ted lived in Los Altos, Ralph in Palo Alto and I in Mountain View, CA. Ted and I took the exam for MSTTS (Military Sea Transport Service). He took a ship and I went into the California State Forestry as a firetruck driver. Ralph went on to college. And so it goes! I just turned 70 years old. My wife passed away in 1993, so I'm now a bachelor again. I was originally W6SLK, then W7JDJ and back to W6SLK and then K6QF and now K6CE. ...73...Jack, K6CE.

Charlie Krause, 1412-V, N7ESJ writes from a South Carolina nursing home "...Lights in the hall are dimmed around 2000 Eastern and I must douse my light around 2200. Boy, does that bring back memories...Sheepshead Bay radar school, taps at 2200, lights out at 2300 - not forgetting the CCC camps, of course..." (Send us a sheet from your "My Day" log, Charlie! - Editor)

NOVEMBER 26, 1943

Denied its rightful place in the history of military tragedy, the time to unlock the secret of this WWII mystery has come.

Sinking of the



ROHNA

Robert Brewer of Stockton, CA clearly remembers the moment he saw a guided missile heading in his direction.

"It's a sight I've never forgotten," says the retired Air Force colonel.

But at the time - Nov. 26, 1943 - Brewer didn't know what was approaching the British troop transport ROHNA. He was a newly commissioned AAF lieutenant and part of a team of communications specialists enroute to the Far East on a secret mission.

On Friday, May 5, 1995, the Editor met with some WWII veterans who were in Columbus, OH to attend a reunion of those who were closely involved in the sinking of HMT ROHNA, a British troopship, an event largely ignored until now. Our host was Col. Robert Brewer, USAF (ret), past Executive Director of the AACCS Alumni Association.

The ROHNA, part of convoy KMF-26, was two days out of Oran, Algeria, bound for the Suez Canal when German bombers swooped out of the sun. Most of the attack planes released conventional bombs, but a few released a "smart" weapon Brewer had not seen before.

"I saw little wings on its side, so at first I thought it was a small fighter diving in toward us. It was approaching on our port side, some 30 feet below where I was looking at it. I ran back just before it struck."

The bomb, released by a Heinkel 177 of the Luftwaffe, struck the ROHNA with a roaring explosion, killing 1,015 American servicemen aboard the transport. It was the second worst naval loss of U.S. personnel in WWII and presaged the missile warfare age, yet this sinking in the Mediterranean has been largely unreported.

The "smart" bomb was a form of guided missile carrying a gyroscopic autopilot maneuvered by the bomber pilot. The missile was guided into the ROHNA's port side, tearing a huge hole, flooding the engine room, knocking out power and starting a fire.

The bomb burst in the midst of the 853rd Aviation Engineering Battalion, killing 491 officers and men. In the composite words of several survivors:

"All I could see were bodies lying around. Many were killed by shrapnel fragments. I was knocked unconscious for about 15 minutes. After recovery I managed to crawl through the hole where the bomb had struck and lower myself to the sea... I estimate that perhaps 500 men were unable to leave the ship. They were trapped or killed by fire, explosion or falling debris."

After the explosion, a stunned Lt. Brewer managed to pull himself together, get up on deck and view the damage.

"I looked over the side and to the rear and saw a tremendous hole in the port side of the ROHNA. It was just above the waterline and it was hissing as water splashed into the fire burning fiercely inside. Now I could see that our ship was badly hit..."

The ROHNA was going down fast, night was coming on and lifeboats were scarce. Brewer soon found himself floating in a sea of oil, debris

Continued, Page 11

ROHNA - From Page 10

and drowning men. Some of those men, at the end of their endurance, were grabbing at others in a desperate attempt to stay afloat.

Paddling clear of panicky groups but encouraging solitary swimmers like himself to keep on going, Brewer floated for seven of the longest hours of his life until a British rescue ship arrived.

The air attack that claimed the ROHNA had lasted almost three hours. British Spitfire fighters, warships and armed transports fought off the air assault by Heinkel 177s and 111s, Dornier 217s and Focke-Wulf 190s. Eight of the 30 German attackers were shot down.

There are stories that cry for telling, survivors say, like that of the American minesweeper USS PIONEER, which rescued 605 men, more than half of the 900 survivors. Allied warships including CLAN CAMPBELL, MINDFUL, HOLCOMBE AND ATHERSTONE, picked up the rest.

Minutes after the explosion, the odds against survival mounted on the ROHNA. Crewmen deserted their stations, leaving inexperienced soldiers to lower lifeboats and rafts. A government report says:

"Practically all the boats were hanging on chains which had rusted in place and were immovable.

"Davits and blocks were rusted...Rafts were rusted to their sides. Rotted ropes and pulleys broke when their lines became fouled and were either left hanging on their davits or were chopped down, dumping their occupants and capsizing immediately upon hitting the water.

Fortunate soldiers clung to overturned lifeboats or rafts, but these were



Colonel Robert M. Brewer
USAF Retired

Past Executive Director of AACS Alumni Association

crowded and often swamped by "sledgehammer blows of waves 15 to 20 feet in height." Many died during rescue attempts when rafts smashed into the sides of ships.

John P. Canney of West Jefferson, Ohio, a survivor, watched the ROHNA from the PIONEER. He says, "The rear of the ship was a mass of flames. There were two or three explosions there and the ROHNA sank quickly."

The whole story has never been told, Col. Brewer said. "British and American military authorities have never officially admitted it took place or given a detailed account of what happened."

The Department of Defense and British Admiralty kept the incident classified long after the war, Brewer said. It was only recently that he and other researchers gained access to documents from declassified files that will enable them to better understand the events of more than 50 years ago.

"I still have the question," says Brewer, "Why did it take so long to get all the materials declassified?"

We also learned from Col. Brewer that he and his wife, Etta, participated in D-Day commemoration activities in France last year. Bob Brewer hand-carried a plaque, shown above, which he presented to the Groupe Nord Artois Picardie of the French Association Nationale des Transmissions de l' Armee - de l' Air, the French counterpart of AACS.

The plaque depicts an AACS salute to their TNB Groupe for the 50th anniversary of D-Day. It also highlights the vital support by communications services of the respective units during WW II.

SOWP will try to exchange publications with the French communications group in the near future.

(Our report on the sinking of the ROHNA is a composite of articles by Howard Lachtman, staff writer for the Stockton, CA *Record* and Don Fortune, a former editor of the San Francisco *Examiner*, writing in the VFW magazine for October, 1993. - Editor)



Buoys and Gulls - by Olive / VE7ERA

NOAH'S ARK AND THE CHAMBERMAIDS



Back in July of '53 **Bill Bruyn**, 1983-V, VE3JBW, was Radio Officer aboard the s.s. Baarn/PCXF, a Victory-ship of the Royal Netherlands S.S. Co. of Amsterdam. The vessel was homeward bound from South America at the time and one persistent rumour kept circulating among the crew - namely that they might be involved in dairy cattle transportation!

This was too good to be true. Fresh milk on board, every day? An ancient dream unattainable to mariners from the early days of sail writes Bill. A recurring complaint among younger crew members was the lack of any fresh milk on board - a sentiment dismissed by senior old salts who knew from experience the greater importance of abundant shipboard supplies of beer and whisky!

But this rumour seemed to be true because as Baarn was tied up to the berth in Amsterdam harbour, stacks of lumber bales of straw were being piled up at the wharf. While cargo was discharged, and taken on, deck stalls to accomodate 90 head of cattle were completed and occupied within four days.

With three stalwart Dutch cattlemen in charge of the cows, the menagerie was ready for a comfortable August ocean crossing - with lots of fresh milk for the crew (or so they thought).

Enjoying fine weather, with good meteo synopses for the North Atlantic, s.s. Baarn set out on its mission of ferrying champion Holstein milk producers from the Low Lands to the Peruvian Altiplano.

No sooner was the pilot dropped outside Ymuiden however, when the bad news was confirmed in no uncertain terms. No fresh milk, period. But why, why? Well, writes Bill, as city-slicker sailors should have suspected, all the cows on board were, agriculturally speaking, 'dry' - i.e. pregnant and not producing any milk. Obviously pregnant cows tend to be very quiet, calm and docile. Ideal conditions as required for such an ambitious sea transport. It would hardly be desirable to have nervous and seasick animals banging and stomping around, tugging at their bonds and chewing up their stall doors.

Baarn, meanwhile, continued on its South-Westerly course, gently moving on a slight swell. The sounds of cow's hoofbeats, their mooing, lowing, snorting and chewing, combined with the smells of hay, straw and manure, created the impression of a modern-day Noah's Ark wending its way toward its eventual destination.

As the ship neared the tropics and warmer weather, the 'cowboys' started to shave the cows with electric clippers in order to give the animals some relief from the higher temperatures.

Everything was going well and the regular herd report messages Bill sent to PCH (Scheveningen Radio) were just routine. However one day out of Cristobal C.Z. a cow died from an unidentified illness and was put overboard - providing the sharks with

the feast of their lives. These scavengers had been following the ship for a long time, apparently having developed a taste for the straw and

manure which was thrown overboard daily. Bill recalled the words of his grandfather who had recounted how sharks would unerringly follow his sailing ship for days, weeks and even months 'because they knew someone of the crew was going to die and his body put overboard', 'Call it superstition?', asks Bill. 'Maybe, maybe not.'

The Panama Canal was traversed smoothly and the ship turned southward. In due course the first calf was born on board, receiving the name of Little Baarn. In total, three calves were to be born before arrival in Peru. Some of the 'heavy' fatty and nourishing milk produced by the cows after calving, went to the Captain's table in the form of pancakes and other delectable pastry items.

The first port of call after leaving the Canal was Guayaquil, Ecuador, where a strange and unexpected problem cropped up having to do with the ship's regular crew lists. These lists, of which numerous copies always had to be available for many purposes, especially for customs and immigration officials, had been typed up on preprinted Spanish language Company forms. Obviously there was no provision for 'herdsmen' or 'cowboys' on this form, so the cattlemen had been listed at the bottom of the page under 'No. 1, No. 2 and No. 3 Chambermaid'. Perhaps an unfortunate choice by the typist of the document (the ship's radio officer).

Anchored midstream in the Guyas river abeam of the city of Guayaquil,

(Continued - Page 13)

The WIRELESS ALMANAC

By Fred Rosebury, 1570-SGP, KA1GEN

Editor's Note: In 1980, Fred Rosebury, who lives in Natick, MA., completed a truly monumental work with the publication of The Wireless Almanac, a 96-page compendium of historic names, dates and facts from the field of wireless and related subjects. This page is an experiment to see whether it is practical to present each quarter a few significant highlights.

JUNE - 3

1621 - Dutch West India Company chartered.

1861 - First field use of a telegraph system in a war: the Civil War.

1898 - Lord Kelvin, William Thomson (British physicist) (1824-1907) had the distinction of sending the first paid wireless message from Needles, England. Kelvin made considerable contributions to electrical knowledge. He suggested stranded wire cable, produced copper of high conductivity, invented the mirror galvanometer, measured absolute resistances of conductors, made great improvements in the magnetic compass and its compensators to counteract the ship's magnetism, invented a sounding apparatus, a tidal gauge and a tidal predictor, made transatlantic telegraphy possible (for which knighthood was bestowed upon him.) He gave lectures on the wave theory of light at Johns Hopkins University in the U.S. in 1884 and in the same year he delivered a searching lecture on the electronic theory of matter before the British Association. (EB)
(see also (DU))

1916 - SS DORA/VAH ashore in southwest Alaska in gale. Cy.H.Pemberton (225-SGP) R/O sent SOS. All saved.
(SWP POC 1968-69, p.56)

1942 - First day of the Battle of Midway Island. (WW-II)

JUNE - 4

1853 - Ground broken for a canal between Lakes Superior and Huron. This was to be the Sault Sainte Marie Canal, a joint effort of the U.S. and Canada.

1912 - Third International Radio-telegraphic Conference met in London. They approved important regulations to secure uniformity of radio services and instituted the present system of call letters. (YB)(HR)

1934 - Launched: First aircraft carrier designed and built as such, was the RANGER, constructed by the Newport News Shipbuilding & Drydock Co., Newport News VA. Her keel was laid Sept.20,1931. She was commissioned at Norfolk VA and formally delivered June 4, 1934. Her first commander was Capt.Arthur Leroy Bristol. (FF)

1941 - SS DELFINA/RIVS exploded; no details. R/O Wm.N. Hayton (130-V) got off his SOS. Crew rescued; ship lost.
(SWP 1968)

1946 - First facsimile transmitted to a moving train as a public demonstration was sent by Robert Emmet Hannegan, Postmaster General of the U.S. from the law library of the Capitol, Washington DC and received on a test car moving from Baltimore MD to Washington on the Baltimore & Ohio RR. The message, "What hath God wrought," written and signed by Margaret Truman, daughter of President Harry S. Truman, was the scene as the telegraph message inaugurating commercial service over the same route. It was sent over WCBM, Baltimore MD. (FF)

JUNE - 5

1594 - Four Dutch ships sailed in search of the Northwest passage.

JUNE - 9

1900 - Nikola Tesla suggested wireless telegraphy as a means of determining the course, speed, and distance of moving objects. A forecast of radar. (DU)(IRE)(SWP 1973)

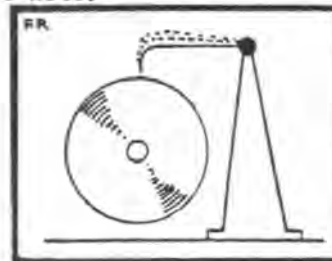
1903 - De Forest granted a patent on a magnetic detector. (HR)

1934 - Federal Communication Commission (FCC) was established. It superseded the Federal Radio Commission of 1927 whose administration and control of the phenomenal growth of the communications industry was inadequate to cover radio, telegraph, telephone, cables, and the newborn television inventions, etc. (HR)

JUNE - 14

1901 - Nikola Tesla (see July 10, 1856, his birth date) applied for a patent on a four tuned-circuit wireless system. (SWP 1973)

At the same time he described a "tikker" for copying continuous wave (CW) signals. This was a mechanical device for interrupting the signal to form a beat note.



CHANGE of ADDRESS

CORRECTION: ABEL, William L., 0942-V, VE7WIL Has relocated to: Space 522, 415 Commonwealth Rd., Kelowna, B.C., Canada V4V 1P4

BULKLEY, David D., 3878-V, KB1LC CALL SIGN CHANGE to KY1O 408 Stage Harbor Rd., Chatham, MA 02633-2228

CLENDENON, William, 2025-V FROM: 3608 Bel Air Lane, Naples, FL 33940 TO: 7 Tvdatsi Dr., Brevard, NC 28712

1492-P GREEN, Smith L., FROM: 70 Granada Calle, Granbury, TX 76049-1468

TO: 225 Granada Calle, Granbury, TX 76049-1426 (Smith reported, "The USPS changed my house number because of "9-1-1" requirements.

HADAD, Alexander S, 4029-V, WB6LZZ CALL SIGN CHANGE to AA6SB 5153 Bela Drive, San Jose, CA 95129

KELLEY, Bruce L., 5215-TA 59 Main Street, Holcomb, NY TOWN NAME CHANGED to Bloomfield, NY 14469-9336

4855-SGP SOWERS, Loren M., K0WOA FROM: R-1, Box 299, (Apt.14) Mansfield, MO 65704-9739

TO: 105 E. Tripp Street, Apt.14, Mansfield, MO 65704-9739

0440-P SULSER, Wayne J., W0BQ FROM: 4709 4709 Urbandale Ave., Des Moines, IA 50310

TO: 2571 Guthrie Ave., Apt. 221 Des Moines, IA 50317

5006-V WHEELER, Frank D., FROM: 150 W. Catalina Dr., Sp.57 Yuma, AZ 85364 TO: 1737 Muscat Ct., Escalon, CA 95320

HURL, James W., 0297-TA, AB6EM FROM: 413 E. Lomita Ave., Orange, CA 92667-6818 TO: Rt. 2, Box 344 Trenton, SC 29847

MILINOWSKI, John A., 5028-M, KD6DFB FROM: 10267 Mast Blvd., Apt "R" TO: 201 S.Horne St., Apt. 1, Oceanside, CA 92054.

**CQ de GLOBE
WIRELESS**

Globe Wireless requests help from Radio Officers and Short Wave Listeners = QSL cards available for valid reception reports.

Globe Wireless, formerly KFS World Communications, is constructing a world-wide network of radio stations for maritime data communications.

Coast stations located in San Francisco (KFS), New Orleans (WNU) and Tors Cove, Newfoundland (VCT) are on the air. Additional stations in Hawaii (KEJ), New Zealand (ZLA) and Sweden are under construction, with more to follow.

Reception data from numerous receiving locations, worldwide, is needed to confirm the coverage area of the network, and especially the newer stations. For this reason, the Globe Wireless Engineering Department is requesting assistance from interested listeners.

Send in your reception reports and you will receive a handsome QSL card suitable for display in your radio shack. Every listener is eligible to receive one QSL card for each Globe Wireless coast station received and correctly reported. Reports are needed from ships at sea, as well as listeners on shore.

Globe Wireless SITOR transmitters can be easily recognized. They broadcast a unique "free signal" pattern,

followed by the station's call sign in CW, when not otherwise in use. KFS SITOR transmit frequencies are: 4211.5, 6315.5, 8417.5, 12580.5, 16829.5, 22377.5 KHZ. WNU SITOR transmits on 4210.5, 6327.0, 8425.5, 12607.5, 16834.5 and 22385.5 KHZ.

Similarly, available CW transmitters broadcast a repetitive "wheel" including the call sign and other information. KFS/cw operates on 4274, 8444.5, 8558.4, 12695.5, 12844.5, 17026, 17184.8 and 22581.5 kHz. WNU/cw operates on 4294, 4310, 6389.65, 8525, 8570, 8688, 12826.5, 12869, 17038, 17117.6, 22575.5 and 22458 kHz. KEJ, Hawaii, scheduled to begin operations April 17, 1995.

To be of maximum value to the Globe Wireless Engineering staff, reception reports should contain the following information:

Date and Time (UTC) of your reception, Call Sign (QRA) of station heard, Either the actual frequency (QRG), or ITU channel number, Mode of transmission heard (SITOR, CW, etc.) Signal strength (QSA) and quality, Any interference (QRM) heard on frequency, or on adjacent channels.

Did you hear traffic or idle signals? If traffic, whom were we working?

Model number of receiver and type of antenna used, Location (QTH) of your receiving station, Any other comments,

Include a complete mailing address with all reports so that we may send your QSL card by return post.

Please send your reception reports for all Globe Wireless stations to: GLOBE WIRELESS Attn.: Engineering Department One Meyn Road Half Moon Bay, CA 94019 USA

**MARINE RADIO TODAY -
One Ship's Report - by Ben Russell,
REO/ WJMV**

(This letter comes from Ben Russell, 1853-V, N6SL, a long-time SOWP member and until late last year an active, sea-going Radio Electronics Officer. Although Ben's letter dates from last December, its content remains very timely in view of the U.S. Coast Guard's termination of CW on April 1, 1995. Ben worked aboard M/V Sea Venture/WJMV for almost nine years. During that time, the planning, design and scheduling took place for the coming Global Marine Distress and Safety System in February, 1999. As always, we thank Ben for his perceptive remarks. -Editor.)

1 Place Lafitte Madisonville, LA 70447
December 1, 1994

Dear Ted,

This letter shows the changes that have taken place in communications aboard the M/V Sea Venture/WJMV between April 1986 up to November 18, 1994 when I retired.

500 kHz

In 1986 nearly all communications were by CW, starting each day with a message to the company at 6:30 AM giving ETA, position, average speed and fuel consumption. These messages were usually sent to WLO on either 4 or 6 MHz by CW. Weather was also received on CW from WPD, WLO, WNU, KLC and NMG on CW. The largest CW challenge was to get the weather covering the West Central North Atlantic from 32N to 40N which in 1987 was sent by NMN on 448 kHz. During periods of heavy QRN and QSB this was frequently very difficult.

In 1989 Dave Riley, AA1A, brought his PK-232 (receiver-computer inter-

face unit) aboard and WLO began sending weather around the clock on a bank of transmitters in all marine H/F bands. Since they included the West Central North Atlantic, I was able to have a fresh weather report on the bridge every day by 8 AM covering the area we were transiting and the next area. This removed the problem of receiving timely weather reports. During the hurricane season when QRN would be bad near storms I had to copy many of the hurricane bulletins by CW.



Ben Russell, 1853-V, N6SL

In 1990 the ship purchased an ICOM M-700-TY transceiver which had direct FSK keying, SSB, and a 2182 KHz auto alarm tone generator and we began to use SITOR for nearly all message traffic. It had the advantage of lower rates per message and not having to wait for an operator to be free.

In 1991 a cellular phone was installed which permitted us to have frequent communications with the office when along the coast. By 1991 the only CW transmissions were the daily testing of main and reserve 500 kHz transmitters.

In 1993 a FAX machine was added to the cellular phone system permitting me to send long departure messages with all cargo times and information when leaving port faster than previously on SITOR. SITOR remained as the main link between ship and shore when the ship was outside of cellular range.

From approximately 1989 to the present, the volume of traffic heard on 500 kHz began a slow but steady decline and several coast stations on 500 kHz signed off permanently. These included commercial coast stations WOE, WPD, WKM, WSL, and USCG stations NMC, NMG, NMA, NMN and NMF.

Distress and Safety

In the past five years the M/V Sea Venture has performed rescues of four small craft which were beyond shore-based VHF communications range. We relayed to USCG the automatic distress signals sent by the M/V Marine Sky/3ETB5 and heard other distress messages concerning fire aboard a cruise ship in the Caribbean.

The most recent rescue occurred on November 12 -13 1994, when the mate on watch heard a distress call from the sailing trimaran Wind Walker on VHF-FM channel 16. We were 128 miles due east of Charleston, SC and the Wind Walker was 108 miles east of Charleston. The Sea Venture located the sailboat at about 1:30 AM on November 13, 1994. They had one float (ama) submerged, were listing at 30 to 40 degrees, 4 persons on board, and no steering in 10 to 12 foot seas.

The Sea Venture got upwind and drifted down to the Wind Walker and secured the sailing vessel to the lee side. Crew members of the Sea Venture boarded the Wind Walker, pumped out the flooded ama float and
(Continued. Page 20)

WELCOME - NEW MEMBERS

A warm "Welcome Aboard" to the following who have joined SOWP since our last issue.

Karen E. McERLANE, 5117-TA AD4UI, 2219 Lime Tree Dr., Edgewater, FL 32141-4601 (Rcvd SOS from "MARU ship" June 15, 1994)

Curtis Morse, 5118-V, W00QS, 4824 N. 95th St., Omaha, NE 68134.

Edward A. Engebretson, 5119-V, W4YC, 1308 Hunting Ridge Rd., Raleigh, NC 27609

David Calderwood, 5120-V, AB5KM, 2755 Louisiana St. #34, Beaumont TX 77702

Paul D. Needler, 5121-V, W9HMR Rt. 2, Box 500, Hanover, IN 47273

Kenneth T. Dowling, 5122-V, W6YCO 1106 Via Mavis, Santa Maria, CA 93455-5651

Kenneth E. Kunze, 5123-V, W9I2J 1050 Lincolnway East, Plymouth, IN 46563

Bill Urie, 5124-V, W7XV, 456 Marlin St., Port Orchard, WA 98366

Patricia A. Urie, 5125-TA, W7ZIW, 2167 SE Hastings Lane, Port Orchard WA 98366

Urban A. Guntner, 5126-V, N3IAD, 527 Windwood Road, Baltimore, MD 21212-2108

Marcel-Henri J. Claing, 5127-V, W1WJC, 8117 Highwood Way, Orangeville, CA 95662-3129

John C. Campbell, 5128-TA, N2YXU, P.O. Box 730, Milburn, NJ 07041-0730

Otto R. Claus, 5129-V, W3LZZ 9 Quail Hill Ct., Parkton, MD 21120-9633

Howard E. Vincent, 5130-M, W8LRD 19313 Mendota St., Detroit, MI 48221

Charles J. Taylor, 5131-M, K6VEL 2035 Litchfield Ave., Long Beach, CA 90815

James W. Parce, 5132-V, WB2ERQ 9417 107th St., Richmond Hill, NY 11416-1826

Gerald V. Gale, 5133-V, AA2SD 76 Cove Road, So. Salem, NY 10590 G

Peter E. Moale, 5134-V, W6WVZ 413 Arbutus Dr., Lake Almanor, CA 96137

A. Prose Walker, 5135-V, W4BW, 1087 Tung Hill Drive, Tallahassee FL 32311-5534

Jesse F. Hickam, 5136-M, N3R5D, 25 Hartlech Dr., Wilmington, DE 19807-2807

Charles R. Armstrong, 5137-M, NE7T 7433 153rd St. Court East Puyallup, WA 98373-7625

John Bischoff, 5138-M, KF4LD, 537 Cameo Terrace, Chesapeake, VA 23320

Paul D. Ciardi, 5139-M, WA2DSN, 9 Cardinal Court, Marlboro, NJ 07746-1809

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SILENT KEYS

With Deep Regret, we report the passing of the following SOWP members as they join our Chapter Eternal. We send our sincere sympathies to those they held dear.

ANDERSON, Raymond C., 4867-V, KA0VQN, Jan 23, 1995 Minneapolis, MN., cancer. He was a past Secretary-Treasurer of GIRA, the Gallups Island Radio Association. (Reported by Alex Newbold, 2407-V, W6MMG.)

DHUGLAS, Dr. Diabidh, 2835-M, GM4ELV, Jan. 23, 1995, Glasgow, Scotland. (Reported by V.J. Reynolds, 1129-V G4ATC and by a daughter of Dr. Dhuglas.)

DROZDIK, Walter, DDS., 0172-V, W6LDO, March 15, 1995, San Jose, CA., Cancer, age 76. Born and reared in Shamokin, PA., he graduated from Bucknell University and went to sea as R/O in 1939. As an Army Captain in World War II, he won a Bronze Star for bravery while serving with Gen. George Patton. After the war Capt. Drozdiak received a dental degree from Northwestern University, was married and migrated to San Jose in 1950. He maintained a dental practice for 34 years. As a youth, Walter Drozdiak learned to sing the Byzantine chants of the Eastern Rite Ukrainian Catholic Church and maintained a life-long interest in music. He sang bass with the Classical Chords barber-shop quartet and played piano, trombone and violin. He is survived by his wife, Stephanie of 47 years, 3 sons, a daughter 2 brothers, 3 sisters and 7 grandchildren. (Reported by Al Hadad, 4029-V, AA6SB).

FELIZ, Sisto J., 329-P, W6QA Feb. 14, 1995, Santa Rosa, CA Heart attack. He was a Charter Member of SOWP.

SILENT KEYS - from Page 17

FREEMAN, Roy N., 2154-V, was killed in a plane crash on Oct. 2, 1994 while taking off from Bella Bella, B.C., where he was arranging a reunion of his wartime RCAF friends. In 1943, Roy was a member of No.9 BR Squadron/BKBG. His home was in Powell River, B.C. (Reported by daughter, Mrs. Gail Marchand.)

FREY, John A., 2765-V, W3ESU, Hendersonville, NC. No details. (Report from QCWA Journal, Spring, 1995)

HISEY, Wilbur H., 4595-P, N6MJR, Nov. 17, 1994, Aptos, CA. Died peacefully in his easy chair. (Reported by Alex Newbold, 2407-V, W6MMG and QST, April, 1995.)

HOYNOS, Stephen A., 2428-V, W8SSN, Lt. Col., U.S. Army Reserve, (Ret.), Mar. 10, 1995. Volunteered for Army duty and was sent to Brooklyn, NY Army base. Assigned to USAT Chateau Thierry as Sparks. Received commission in Army Transportation Corps and completed service at Fort Mead, MD. Was a licensed radio amateur 55 years and persuaded his daughter to join amateur ranks. She is now KA8LMR and sent in this report.

KERR, Edward B. Sr., age 95, June 27, 1994, W2QUH, Trenton, NJ. In WWII he was a military base station operator and later Chief Operator for his sector. Served in USNR at U.S. naval base in Cuba. After the war he continued amateur activities as W3CCC; received present call when FCC reassigned his area. He accumulated a vast library of texts and manuals and spent many hours building and modifying equipment. (Reported by son, Robert T. Kerr.)

KORN, Wayne A., 649-M, K7PPZ, Eau Claire, WI, Feb. 8, 1995, age 62. Cause: Brain aneurism. (Report from Don Newman, W7CO.)

KRONES, Aldrich C., 1460-SGP, K9AA, passed away in late 1994 at Mt. Carmel Health Center, Milwaukee, WI. Age past 90. Al began his shipboard career (1925-1931) as R/O aboard Great Lakes freighters and passenger boats. First was SS Harvey H. Brown, followed by 10 others including 3 passenger ships, SS Octorara and two ships of the Goodrich Line, SS Illinois and SS Indiana. In 1925 Al came ashore to serve 43 years in Milwaukee police radio as operator and technician. In recent years Al lived alone as a widower. He kept active in amateur radio and was a regular member of our Transcon nets. (Report from QCWA Journal, Spring, 1995 and SOWP records.)

MACY, Ralph, 1101-V, W0GDE, Sioux Falls, SD. He was an active, seagoing Radio Officer and a member of the American Radio Association which reported his passing in its radio press broadcast of April 30, 1995.

MARTIN, John F., 2433-P, W6SE, at Scripps Mem. Hospital, Encinitas CA. May 1, 1995. (His son, Al, WA6SGK, said "He was a fine father and a great friend and will be sorely missed by all who knew him.")

METZ, Marion A., 976-P, W7BJG, Issaquah, WA., after a 10-year battle with prostate cancer, age 85. He was a regular member of the Jack Binns Chapter lunch group at the Doghouse restaurant in Seattle, WA. (Reported by QCWA Journal, Spring, 1995 and Don Newman, W7CO.)

SCRUGGS, Robert A., 2478-P, W2FRX, Valley Stream, NY. No other details. (Reported by J. Kelleher, W4ZC)

SHAW, Glenn H., 5329-TA, W6NI, Rockport, TX., died Feb. 18, 1995 of a massive stroke; age 74 years, 10 months. Reported by his wife, Marian. Had been a radio amateur since age 16.

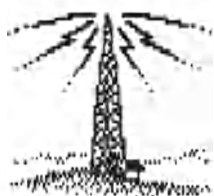
SHEBAL, Robert J., 4597-V, W8ZKL, Royal Oak, MI in 1994. No details. (Report from QCWA Journal, Spring 1995).

TRAXLER, Robert J., 4606-V, KA6VHY, San Leandro, CA. (No other details.)

TURNER, Harry A., 3047-P, W9YZE, December, 21, 1994, Alton, IL. Age 88. While in military service in 1942, he was clocked at 35 wpm sending with a hand key. This is a record still standing and is included in the current Guinness Book of Records. Turner was a very active member of the Morse Telegraph Club. Survived by his wife, Edith. (Report from ARRL Special Bulletin 11, Feb. 2, 1995.)

WILEY, George H., 364-P, W6VKT, Sacramento, CA., April 10, 1995. Complications following surgery for brain tumor, age 87. George was born April 30, 1907 in San Diego, CA. He received his commercial operator license in 1924 and his first seagoing job aboard SS Admiral Farragut/WAF in 1926. He served on passenger liners and cargo ships until 1939. His last berth was aboard a lumber vessel, SS Hamlin F. McCormick/KESD. From 1944 to 1950, George worked at the RCA receiving station, (KPH) at Pt. Reyes, CA. He kept his First Class Radiotelegraph Operator license until March 17, 1972. He was a life-long ham radio operator with call sign W6VKT since the late 1940's. For many years he was a member of a daily Pacific Coast CW weather net, the PCN. In addition to SOWP, George Wiley was a member of QCWA. (Reported by his son, Reginald Wiley, QCWA and Paul L. Wolf, 3041-M, W6RLP.)

WORDEN, Marion R., 4563-M, W5SM, Beaumont, TX., 1995. No details. (Reported in QCWA Journal, Spring 1995)



SOWP NETS & SCHEDULES / UTC

EFFECTIVE 2 APR. 1995 THROUGH 28 OCT. 1995 - (DAYLIGHT TIME IN NORTH AMERICA)

NET NAME	DAY	TIME(UTC)	FREQ.	NCS	ANCS
VANCOUVER B.C.	Daily	1615- 1700	147.54 FM SPX	VE7AAT-Art	VE7YL- Elizabeth
HAPPY HOUR(No.Calif) (SSB)	M-F	0000	3947.5	W6TQU-Hap	KD6HO-Chas.
PICKERILL	Start	MON	1400	FM 146.97	W2EEQ-Russ (Mt. Carmel)
"	QSY	"	"	FM 145.135	(Don Masten Memorial Net)
INLAND SEAS	MON	2300	7040	W8FEC-Art	W8PQO- "SP"
"	TUE	0000	3555	W8FEC-Art	W8PQO- "SP"
CAPITAL AREA (SSB)	TUE	1400	3966	W4HU-John+ +NCS alternates each week+	W4ZC-Jack+
H.K.WARNER MEMORIAL TRANSCONTINENTAL NET	TUE	1700	14058	W8CCN-Tom	
SOUTHWESTERN	TUE	1430	7055	W5RM - Pres	
JACK BINNS	WED	0300	3555	VE7KWK- Keith	
OSCAR HARRISON MEM. TRANSCONTINENTAL NET	THU	1500	14058	W0AP - Mac	
RICHARD JOHNSTONE (Pacific Coast (NET CLOSED JUNE THRU AUGUST))	FRI	0300	3555	W7FLF-Tuck ROLL CALL	W6EJB-John BULLETINS
CAPITAL AREA	SAT	1300	3665	W4HU-John+ +NCS alternates each week+	W4ZC-Jack+
YANKEE EAST COAST	SAT	1330	7040	KA2ZNE-Bob	W8FEC-Art
SWISS (Edelweiss)	SUN	0915	7027	DJ0OS-Cliff	HB9BYO- Harald
YANKEE/E.COAST(SSB)	SUN	1730	7230	AA2FJ-Les	
SOUTHEASTERN	SUN	1800	7053/52	K4HDV-Dan	N4PS-Sam

Most of these nets maintain the same local starting time throughout the year. From April through October they begin one hour earlier by the UTC clock.

- SOWP HIGH SPEED CODE PRACTICE and CERTIFICATION TEST SCHEDULES -
George Hart, W1NJM, regularly conducts high speed practice and certification tests sponsored by SOWP throughout the year on Monday and Thursday at 0130 UTC on 3523 and 7023 kHz. From December through April, the schedule is maintained from W1NJM/4. Certification tests are held on the first Monday (UTC) in May and November at 0130 UTC. On the practice runs, speeds are from 20-65 wpm in various increments, decrements and sequences as announced by W1NJM. W. Conley Smith, K6DYX has two runs each week on 7025 KHz at 0330 UTC Monday and Thursday. Rob Griffin, AB6YR will be Smitty's backup. Speeds for the certification tests are from 40 through 60 wpm in 5 wpm steps.

Note: Send changes/corrections to Chief Operator John Swafford, W4HU, at 2025 N.Kensington St., Arlington, VA 22205 USA. Tel: 703 536-9537

Ben Russell - From Page 16

made fiberglass repairs. The Sea Venture's Chief Engineer repaired Wind Walker's steering system and by 6 AM released her. She proceeded to Charleston for repairs. I provided constant communications with the USCG Charleston Group on 2182 and 2670 KHZ between midnight and 6 A.M. It was not necessary for the Coast Guard to evacuate any personnel or provide additional pumps or any assistance. however, they did have a helicopter on stand-by if personnel evacuations became necessary.

It is interesting to note that during any of the recent distress cases that I was involved in, GMDSS frequencies and techniques were not used and no SAR (Search and Rescue) messages were broadcast by NAVTEX. During the same time period many ships were

fully GMDSS operational but probably unaware of the nearby distress situation. I think that GMDSS operating procedures and training will have to be speeded up to make the new system effective, since the old Morse-based systems will be gone by February 1, 1999

73 - Ben, N6SL

WEEKEND PRESS VIA CW

The American Radio Assoc. (ARA) sponsors press broadcasts each weekend on CW and FEC: Here are the CW schedules:

STATION	UTC/DAY	QRG's
KFS	0518/MO	8558.4, 12844.5, 17026, 22581.5
WCC	1800/SU	6376, 8586, 12847, 16972
WLO	(0215&0515 SA & SU)	
		4343, 6416, 8514, 12886.5, 17022.5, 22487 KHz. after traffic lists.



THE EDITOR'S CORNER

As we go to press, the petition to FCC (RM8626) by Fred Maia, W5YL, to ban broadcast bulletins and code practice in the amateur bands had not yet been acted on. It may NOT result in rules changes by FCC.

Ye Ed again says "Many Thanks" to all our contributors for this issue. And to those whose articles did not make print this time, our apologies, 73 and ORX until September.

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